

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15

SS-20 NSC-10 SAJ-01 SPC-03 SAM-01 DRC-01 /125 W

----- 102885

R 201255Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6944

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 4346

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLAB, FR

SUBJECT: CFDT LEADER COMMENTS ON GENEVA MEETING

1. SUMMARY: SALANNE OF CFDT CRITICIZES POOR PREPARATION OF GENEVA CONFERENCE AND CONSIDERS THAT IT DID NOT ADVANCE SOVIET OBJECTIVES. HE EMPHASIZED THAT MULTILATERAL WE-EE CONTACTS SHOULD BE LIMITED AND WELL PREPARED. URGED STRENGTHENING OF ETUC AND EXPRESSED PUZZLEMENT OVER TUC (UK) BEHAVIOR BEFORE AND DURING CONFERENCE. END SUMMARY

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2. RENE SALANNE OF CFDT INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS GAVE LABATT 15

FEBRUARY FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT ON GENEVA EAST-WEST LABOR MEETING
19 JANUARY WHICH HE ADDENDED:

A. POOR PREPARATION OF MEETING AND EVEN POORER COORDINATION AMONG
WESTERN EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC UNIONS EXPOSED WE LABOR MOVEMENT TO
SERIOUS RISKS BECAUSE OF OBVIOUS SOVIET STRATEGY TO EXPLOIT DETENTE
FOR PURPOSE OF EXPANDING SOVIET INFLUENCE IN WE UNIONS.
B. WHILE HOLDING OF GENEVA CONFERENCE WAS SOVIET SUCCESS, OUTCOME
OF CONFERENCE SHOULD BE PUT DOWN AS SOVIET FAILURE. SOVIETS HOPE
TO ESTABLISH A PERMANENT STRUCTURE FOR EAST-WEST CONTACTS DID NOT
MATERIALIZE AND THE PLANS TO HOLD ANOTHER CONFERENCE AT THE END OF 1974

ARE PREDICATED ON ITS BEING HELD UNDER ILO AUSPICES.

C. SALANNE WAS EMPHATIC IN EXPRESSING HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT ILO
AUSPICES MEANS NOT ONLY THAT NEXT CONFERENCE SHOULD COINCIDE
WITH SOME ILO EUROPEAN REGIONAL ACTIVITY, BUT THAT IT SHOULD HAVE
ILO ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, SUCH AS CONFERENCE ROOM AND INTERPRETERS.
BASED ON THIS UNDERSTANDING, HE DID NOT SEE HOW THE PROJECTED
CONFERENCE COULD BE HELD BEFORE SPRING 1975, WHICH IS EARLIEST
DATE ON WHICH AN ILO EUROPEAN REGIONAL ACTIVITY CAN BE ORGANIZED
AND FINANCED SINCE 1974 BUDGET HAS MADE NO PROVISION FOR ANY
SUCH ACTIVITY.

3. IN SPEAKING ABOUT EAST-WEST CONTACTS IN LABOR FIELD, SALANNE
POINTED OUT THAT CFDT DOES NOT OBJECT TO BILATERAL CONTACTS
PROVIDED THAT WE UNION LEADERS ARE CLEAR IN THEIR OWN MINDS ABOUT
THE VERY LIMITED PURPOSE SUCH CONTACTS CAN ACCOMPLISH AND, ABOVE
ALL, REMAIN ALERT AND DETERMINED TO AVOID ANY COMPROMISE OF THEIR
IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES WITH EE UNIONS.

4. AS FAR AS MULTILATERAL WE-EE CONTACTS ARE CONCERNED, CFDT IS
BASICALLY OPPOSED TO THEM UNLESS THEY ARE DESIGNED AND CAREFULLY
PREPARED TO SERVE A SPECIFIC PURPOSE ACCEPTABLE TO WEST. CFDT IS
ESPECIALLY OPPOSED TO ANY IDEAS ABOUT UNITARY WE-EE ORGANIZATIONAL
STRUCTURES.

5. WHETHER IN THE LABOR FIELD OR ANY OTHER, REMARKED SALANNE,
ONE CAN DEAL WITH COMMUNISTS ONLY FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH.
ACCORDINGLY, ANY EAST-WEST CONTACTS IN THE FUTURE MUST BE SPACED
IN TIME TO ALLOW FOR THE GROWTH AND STRENGTHENING OF ETUC. IN
FACT, STRENGTHENING OF ETUC SHOULD BE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF ALL WE
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DEMOCRATIC UNIONS IN MONTHS AHEAD. EVEN WHEN THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED,
WE LABOR LEADERS SHOULD NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF FACT THAT EE LABOR
ORGANIZATIONS CAN NEVER BE TRUE PARTNERS IN ANY JOINT ORGANIZATION
WITH WE UNIONS BECAUSE IN COMMUNIST COUNTRIES UNIONS ARE NOTHING
MORE THAN INSTRUMENTS OF GOVERNMENTS AND COMMUNIST PARTIES.

6. ASKED WHY, UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THERE SHOULD BE ANY
CONTACTS WITH COMMUNIST UNIONS AT ALL, SALANNE MAINTAINED THAT

THESE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS DO CONSTITUTE A PART OF EE REAL WORLD WHICH CANNOT BE IGNORED. THEY SHOULD BE DEALT WITH BUT NOT ACCEPTED AS MEMBERS OF WE UNION ORGANIZATIONS.

7. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS DURING DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT, SALANNE EXPRESSED PUZZLEMENT ABOUT TUC (UK) BEHAVIOR BEFORE AND DURING GENEVA MEETING. HE WENT SO FAR AS TO CHARACTERIZE TUC LEADERS AS "BABES IN THE WOODS" WHEN IT CAME TO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND DEALINGS WITH THE SOVIETS. HE THOUGHT THAT TUC AND THE SOVIETS HAD AGREED BEFORE 19 JANUARY MEETING ABOUT ESTABLISHING A JOINT EAST-WEST LIAISON COMMITTEE AND HOLDING NEXT CONFERENCE INDEPENDENTLY OF ILO, BUT "SOVIETS WERE SMART ENOUGH TO REALIZE THAT THERE WOULD BE OBJECTIONS TO SUCH ARRANGEMENTS AND RETREATED".

8. COMMENT: THE FOREGOING DOES NOT REFLECT SALANNE'S PERSONAL VIEW BUT THOSE OF CFDT'S COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP WHICH HAS BEEN SENSITIVE TO THE IDEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF MULTILATERAL CONTACTS WITH EE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND TO THE SUBSTANTIAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WE AND EE LABOR MOVEMENTS FROM POINT OF VIEW OF INTERNAL COHESION AND THEIR ABILITY TO ACT AS A GROUP. IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT IT WAS CFDT WHICH FIRST OPPOSED AND SUCCESSFULLY SLOWED DOWN WCL CONTACTS WITH WFTU. FURTHERMORE, SALANN'S STATEMENTS ARE NOT INCOMPATIBLE WITH CFDT'S REGULAR CONTACTS WITH COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED CGT ON THE FRENCH SCENE. THE CFDT LEADERS ARE PURSUING A "UNITY OF ACTION" PROGRAM WITH THE CGT ONLY FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES AS DEFINED BY THEM AND NOT BY THE CGT. MOREOVER, AT NO TIME HAS THE CFDT FELT COMPELLED BY ITS LIMITED COOPERATION WITH THE CGT TO TONE DOWN ITS IDEOLOGICAL OPPOSITION TO CGT. IN FACT IT HAS YET TO MISS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CRITICIZE CGT'S SUBORDINATION TO THE PCF.IRWIN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR RELATIONS, TRADE PROMOTION, DETENTE, GOVERNMENT BUDGET, MEETING AGENDA, COMMUNIST FRONT ORGANIZATIONS, LABOR UNIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PARIS04346
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740221/aaaaatpt.tel
Line Count: 144
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAR 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <01 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CFDT LEADER COMMENTS ON GENEVA MEETING
TAGS: ELAB, FR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005